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Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 6(8): 65-73, 2012
ISSN 1991-8178

Warfare in the History of the Marinid Military from The Chronicle of al-Salawi

[1,2]Ezad Azraai Jamsari, [1,2]Mohamad Zulfazdlee Abul Hassan Ashari, [1,2]Azmul Fahimi Kamaruzaman and [3]Adibah Sulaiman @ Mohamad

[1]Department of Arabic Studies and Islamic Civilization, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
[2]Institute of West Asian Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
[3]Centre of Core Studies, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, 71800 Bandar Baru Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

Abstract: This article examines the series of wars that occurred in the military history during the reign of the Marinid Kingdom (1215-1465 A.D.). The writing is based on the work of Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri al-Salawi (d.1315 H./1897 A.D.) entitled, *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. The main goal of this article is to study on the biography of al-Salawi and his capacity to become a great Muslim historian, especially on the history of al-Maghrib. In addition, it seeks to identify and highlight the series of wars that happened during the Marinid era. Overall, this article used a qualitative method which comprises library research, historical study and content analysis. These were done through reviewing and examining the data regarding the military history in al-Salawi's work. The findings showed that al-Salawi is a prominent historian of al-Maghrib and his work, *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*, is regarded as his greatest contribution to the discipline of Islamic history and civilization in al-Maghrib and al-Andalus, and the field of Islamic military history in particular.

Key words: Marinid kingdom, Islamic military history, Warfare, al-Salawi, al-Maghrib, al-Andalus

INTRODUCTION

The name Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri al-Salawi is not yet familiar to the Muslim society in the South East Asia region today. However, this name would be considerably famous if we were to study and discuss the history of al-Maghrib. This is because he had written extensively on the history of al-Maghrib such as in the book, *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. This book chronologically records various historical events of al-Maghrib beginning from the period of Khulafa' al-Rashidin (the Rightly Guided Caliphs) until the reign of al-'Alawiyyun (Alaouite) Kingdom in the 18th Century. In addition, he had also produced several other works which encompassed various fields such as literature, *fiqh* (law) and sociology.

The book *al-Istiqsa* has become the primary reference (*masdar min masadir*) for every study and discussion on the history of al-Maghrib, including the war events which occurred in that province. Among the histories of the Muslim kingdoms in al-Maghrib recorded in this book is the history of the Marinid Kingdom. The records encompassed the history of the emergence, development, affairs of governance, social life of the people, military campaigns and warfare as well as the downfall of the Marinid Kingdom, and which emerged in al-Maghrib after the downfall of al-Muwahhidun (Almohad) Kingdom. The Banu Marin or Marinid Kingdom faced various challenges during the era of its formation and consolidation as well as during the era of weakness and decline. Nevertheless, the kingdom, which began in 1215 and lasted until 1465 A.D., did savor excellence in various fields such as politics, economics, social, military and arts.

In addition, the Marinid Kingdom expanded its rule over the territories of al-Maghrib and al-Andalus. The Marinid Kingdom did once subjugate the contemporary kingdoms of Banu Hafs (Hafsid) and Banu 'Abd al-Wad (Abdalwadid). Other than that, the Marinid Kingdom also involved itself in the political affairs of al-Andalus when it sent military aid to the Nasrid Kingdom in Granada when the latter was facing attacks from the Christian kingdoms in the northern province of the Iberian Peninsular (al-Andalus). However, the defeat in the battle of *Tarifa* or the Battle of Rio Salado in the year 1340 A.D. in the hands of the Christians had forced the Marinid military to leave al-Andalus. Even so, the glory of this kingdom was continued by the development and achievements in various social aspects such as administrative management, development of education and arts, the vigour of economic activity as well as the preservation of an intact culture. However, the demise of Sultan Abu 'Inan Faris (1351-1358 A.D.) is seen as the beginning moment of decline for the Marinid Kingdom. The various problems which arose, whether internal or external, had become a factor for the weakness of the Marinids. The political and administrative turmoil was deemed as an important factor contributing to the

Corresponding Author: Ezad Azraai Jamsari, Department of Arabic Studies and Islamic Civilization, Faculty of Islamic Studies & Institute of West Asian Studies (IKRAB), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia
E-mail: eajsti@gmail.com; Tel: +60389215291; Fax: +60389213185

downfall of the Marinids and finally caused the leadership control over the territories of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* to pass into the hands of the Banu Wattas in the year 1465 A.D. All the historical records on the Marinids as above have been written in detail in al-Salawi's work, *al-Istiqsa*. This study only focuses on the series of war which occurred in the history of the military throughout the reign of the Marinids (1215-1465 A.D.).

Most of the literature that is relevant to the Marinids is written in either Arabic or English. As far as the Malay language is concerned, the numbers of sources that discuss the Marinids are very limited and among the first few persons who highlight and then analyze the subject matter are Mahayudin (1987), Hamka (1994), Ezad Azraai (2004 & 2006), Ezad Azraai *et al*. (2009 & 2011), Ezad Azraai and Mohamad Zulfazdlee (2010), and lastly, Mohamad Zulfazdlee and Ezad Azraai (2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2010a, 2010b & 2010c).

The Biography of al-Salawi:

The full name of al-Salawi was Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. Khalid b. Hammad b. Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Nasir al-Dar'i. His grandfather was the founder of *al-Zawiyah al-Nasiriyyah* in al-Maghrib (al-Salawi, 1954). According to al-Zirikli (1999), his name was Ahmad b. Khalid b. Hammad b. Muhammad al-Nasiri al-Dar'i. His line of ancestry continued up to 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. Abi Talib, the husband of Zaynab (r.a.) who was related to al-Hasan b. 'Ali (r.a.) and al-Husayn b. 'Ali (r.a.). He was also called by the title *Shihab al-Din* and al-Salawi and was a renowned historian.

He was born in Sala at daybreak, Saturday, 22 Dhu al-Hijjah 1250 H. or 22 March 1835 A.D. (al-Salawi, 1954). He was born and raised in Sala after his family moved from Dar'ah and settled in the city. He was of Arab Ma'qal descent, a tribe which had moved to al-Maghrib in the 5th Century of Hijrah. Before settling in al-Maghrib, this Arab tribe dwelled in the Arabian Peninsula and then moved to Egypt in the 4th Century of Hijrah after a struggle for power between the Banu Ma'qal and Banu al-Husayn then. Banu Ma'qal had lived in the territory of Egypt until an event triggered discordance and hatred between the ruler of Egypt, al-Mustansir bi Allah al-'Abidi and the governor, Badis al- Sanhaji. Al-Mustansir had ordered the Arabs of Banu Hilal b. 'Amir and Banu Sulaym b. Mansur to join him in attacking Badis. The war had lasted for a long time and the Arab tribes were not compensated for their participation in the war. Thus, some groups of the Banu Ja'far who had lived in the territory of Egypt took the step of migrating to al-Maghrib and settled in several areas such as Malwiyyah, Tafilalat and Dar'ah (al-Salawi, 1954). The Ibn Nasr descendants had a famous reputation and were renowned for establishing *al-zawiyah* or *pondok* (hut) schools in the areas of al-Maghrib. The al-Salawi family was esteemed for their honour and deep knowledge when al-Salawi's father built *al-zawiyah* known as *Zawiyah al-Barakah*. Subsequent to that, his family moved to Sala in the year 1220 H./1805 A.D. There, the Arab tribes nearby also respected them for their deep knowledge as well as piety and *zuhud* (unworldliness). Later, the father moved to Tanjah and married his uncle's daughter named Zaynab bt. al-Faqih 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Nasiri. The wife was from a very rich family and they lived together for several years before the wife died. Al-Salawi's father inherited her property and wealth as well as the running of the farm and businesses with other tribes. Later, his father married Fatimah bt. Muhammad b. Zuruq al-'Ilmi, a woman from the class of Sharif of Jabal al-'Ilmi. Ahmad b. Khalid al-Salawi, the writer of *al-Istiqsa* (al-Salawi, 1954), was the offspring from this marriage. On the return journey to Sala, Fatimah, who was already pregnant, gave birth to al-Salawi upon their arrival at Sala in the year 1250 H./1835 A.D.

Al-Salawi's Education:

Al-Salawi also grew up in Muscat and later followed his family to Sala. His education in Sala encompassed Islamic education and Arabic language, in view of the abundance of educational institutes and numerous scholars in various fields there. Al-Salawi learnt to read al-Qur'an since he was a child from his teacher, al-Ustadh al-Hajj Muhammad al-'Alawi al-Salawi. Later, he learnt the basics of reading and comprehending al-Qur'an from al-Ustadh Muhammad al-Jaylani al-Hammadi (al-Salawi, 1954).

Al-Salawi continued his studies in the same field with al-Ustadh Muhammad b. Talhah al-Sabahi until his teacher's demise. He completed his study in the field of *al-Qira'at al-Sab'ah* with al-Ustadh 'Abd al-Salam b. Talhah. He learnt from the latter *Tajwid* and memorized various *matan* such as *Manzumat al-Shatibi*, *Matan Ibn 'Abd al-Bir*, *Khulasat Ibn Malik*, *Talkhis al-Miftah wa Ibn al-Subki* and *Mukhtasar al-Shaykh Khalil*. He also studied Arabic language from al-Shaykh al-'Allamah Muhammad b. 'Abd al-'Aziz. Among the sciences that he learnt from this favourite teacher were *nahw*, *balaghah*, *mantiq*, *kalam*, *fiqh*, *Usuluddin* and Arabic literature. He studied under him until he moved to Hijaz and died there in the year 1279H/1863 A.D. Among his other teachers were al-'Allamah Qadi Sala, Abu Bakr b. Muhammad 'Iwad al-Salawi. He studied *balaghah*, Hadith, *sirah*, *tasawwuf* and philosophy of religion from this teacher (al-Salawi, 1954).

After the death of his father, al-Salawi together with his brother was busy managing the business and farming that his father had left. Nevertheless, this hectic occupation did not hinder him from continuing his studies. He studied *Tafsir*, Hadith, science and mathematics. Apart from these, he also studied and reviewed works of history, classical as well as contemporary, particularly writings of western historians. He also studied and reviewed geography books, classical and those written in foreign languages. He was knowledgeable in

various contemporary sciences, particularly those which originated from Europe through observation and reading of science journals (al-Salawi, 1954). Hence, it is not surprising that he is regarded as a scientist based on his experience and strong determination to acquire various branches of knowledge.

The Works of al-Salawi:

Al-Salawi has produced many works in various fields (al-Salawi, 1954), among which are:

- *Ta'liq 'ala Diwan Ibn al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi*, is a book of annotations and commentaries to the *Diwan al-Mutanabbi*, specifically in matters relating to *gharib al-lughah* and verses in poetry which need explanation from the aspect of *balaghah*. This book was completed in the year 1279 H./1862 A.D.
- *Ta'liq 'ala Raqm al-Hilal fi Akhbar al-Duwal li Ibn al-Khatib al-Salmani*, is a book of excellent annotations of a great historical work, *Raqm al-Hilal fi Akhbar al-Duwal*, the work of Ibn al-Khatib. This book augments information not included by Ibn al-Khatib, that is, relating to the governance of Egypt and Sham (Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon) in the mid-century. This book was completed in the year 1285 H./1869 A.D.
- *Ta'liq 'ala Bidayat al-Qudama' wa Hidayat al-Hukama'*, this book discusses books relating to history and previous civilizations. In its original state, this book was in the French language, which was translated by a contemporary scientist, al-Shaykh Rifa'at Bik al-Tahtawi al-Misri, head of the Translation Department, Knowledge and Information Section (*Idarat al-'Ulum wa al-Ma'arif*) in Cairo. This book was completed in the year 1285 H./1869 A.D.
- *Ta'liq 'ala Sharh Ibn Badrun li Qasidat Ibn 'Abdun*, is a book of annotations of the lectures (reviews and descriptions) of a literateur, 'Abd al-Malik b. Badrun al-Hadrani al-Andalusi on the *qasidah* written by Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Majid b. 'Abdun who lamented the Banu Salmah or known as Banu al-Aftas during the era of *Muluk al-Tawa'if* in al-Andalus. This book was completed in the year 1285 H./1869 A.D.
- *al-Fawa'id al-Muhaqqaqah fi Ibtal Da'wa an al-Ta' Ta' Muraqqaqah*.
- *Risalat fi Tahqiq Amr Sab'ah Rijal Difna' Marrakish*, was written and used in Marrakesh city in the year 1294H/1877 A.D. as a response and reaction to all the questions directed to al-Salawi by his companion, al-'Allamah al-Adib Muhammad al-Amin b. 'Abd Allah al-Hujjaji or known as al-Sahrawi al-Marrakushi. Al-Sahrawi also produced his two-volume work entitled, *al-Majd al-Tarif wa al-Talid*, which contains all the questions he asked al-Salawi and which is still kept in al-Khazanah al-Nasiriyyah.
- *Kashf al-'Arin 'an Luyuth Bani Marin*, is a summary of the history of the Marinid Kingdom. It was completed in the year 1295 H./1878 A.D.
- *Risalat fi al-Radd 'ala al-Tabi'iyyin*.
- *Talif fi Mas'alat I'ta' al-Rusum*, was written as an outcome of *mudhakarah* (discussion) between al-Salawi and the Mufti of Fas, al-Shahir al-Mahdi al-Wizani, relating to the problem of giving taxes.
- *Taqyid Mukhtasar fi Hasr Jamharat Al Nasir*, emulates the style of writing in the book, *Tal'at al-Mushtari fi al-Nasab al-Ja'fari*, which discusses the Nasir family in al-Maghrib. It was completed in the year 1308 H./1890 A.D.
- *Tal'at al-Mushtari fi al-Nasab al-Ja'fari***,** investigated the ancestry of his grandfather, al-Shaykh Ibn Nasir and continued until 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. Abi Talib. This work was completed by 1309 H./1891 A.D.
- *Shahr Musa'adat al-Ikhwan*, contains *qasidah* by al-Shaykh Muhammad b. Nasir, entitled *Musa'adat al-Ikhwan min al-Hashm wa al-'Awan 'ala ma Yu'ayyin 'ala al-Birr wa al-Taqwa wa Yusrif 'an al-Ithm wa al-'Udwan*. It was completed in the year 1310 H./1892 A.D.
- *Wasiyyat wa 'Aziyyat*.
- *Tarikh al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*, is about the history of al-Maghrib beginning from the period of *al-futuhat al-Islamiyyah* in the said province until the era of Sultan al-Mawla 'Abd al-Aziz b. al-Hasan, the ruler of al-'Alawiyyun Kingdom.
- *Daftar Muharrarat wa Usul Tarikhiyyah*.
- *Ta'liq 'ala Safina al-Raghib*, was named after the philosopher, al-Shaykh Muhammad Raghib Basha, who was also one of the *wazir* of the Ottomans. This work discusses the whole debate relating to philosophy of reason in the natural sciences.
- *Majmu' Fatawiyyah al-Fiqhiyyah*, is a collection of syariah fatwa and *fiqh*.
- *Risalat al-Hawariyyin*, contains the dialogue between the followers of Prophet Jesus (a.s.) relating to Christianity and its preaching.
- *Risalatan fi Fann al-Musiqi*, was written by al-Salawi and his companion, al-'Allamah al-Falaki Idris b. Muhammad al-Ja'idi al-Salawi, and discusses Arabic music in comparison to non-Arabic music.
- *Risalat fi Tahdid li Wulah*, discusses the differences in jurisdiction of the ruler, *qadi* and *hisbah* official in al-Maghrib.
- *Qanun fi al-Tartib al-Idari wa al-Jibayat al-Maliyyah bi al-Maghrib*, discusses the sources of syariah.
- *Ta'liq 'ala Qasidat 'Amru b. Mudrak al-Shaybani*.

- *Taqyid fi al-Barbar*, describes the Berber tribe before the introduction of Islam in al-Maghrib province until the period of Banu al-Aghlab in Ifriqiyyah and Banu Idris in *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*.
- *al-Falak al-Mashhun bi Nafa'is Tabsirat Ibn Farhun*, is a *hashiyyah* to the records of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim b. Farhun in the field of law.

Many of al-Salawi's works have yet to be published and printed as of today, with the exception of three as follows (al-Salawi, 1954):

- *Tarikh al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*, which was printed in Cairo in the year 1312 H./1895 A.D.
- *Zahr al-Afnan min Hadiqat Ibn al-Winan*, which was printed in Fas in the year 1314 H./1896 A.D.
- *Tal'at al-Mushtari fi al-Nasab al-Ja'fari*, which was printed in Fas in the year 1320 H./1902AD.

Kitab al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa:

The work *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* is a chronological history of al-Maghrib. According to Garcia-Arenal (1978), this work is the prime reference which discusses the history of al-Maghrib because it emulates the chronological and informative style of Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Qadi (960-1025 H./1552-1616 A.D.), in his work *Durrat al-Hijal*. In addition, *al-Istiqsa* is also the prime reference for European writers for discussing the history of al-Maghrib. Based on al-Hariri's notes (1987), *al-Istiqsa* was printed in Cairo in the year 1312 H. and in Dar al-Bayda' in the year 1954 A.D. The two prints had different total volumes. In the Cairo print, the issue of the Marinids is discussed in the first and second volumes, whereas in the Dar al-Bayda' print, it is discussed in the third and fourth volumes. Al-Salawi had cited much information from previous history books, specifically from *Tarikh Ibn Khaldun*. He had also cited historical information from al-Maghrib and al-Andalus historians such as Ibn Abi Zar' and al-Maqqari.

Among the factors for writing this work was the dearth of sources which discussed the history of al-Maghrib in detail (al-Salawi, 1954). Even though there was a venerated book on the history of al-Maghrib, discussion in most of the books was contemporary according to the writer's era and not specialized. For example, Ibn Khaldun in his book, *al-'Ibar*, did not only write on the history of al-Maghrib, but also included other matters such as the ancestry of certain tribes like the Berber and the history of Islam beyond the borders. Ibn Abi Zar' (n.d.) in his book, *al-Anis al-Mutrib*, discussed the history of al-Maghrib in general and the history of Fas city, specifically beginning from the reign of al-Idrisiyyah (Idrisid) Kingdom until the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id 'Uthman b. Ya'qub b. 'Abd al-Haqq al-Marini (710-731 H./1310-1331 A.D.). Nevertheless, both books were referred to by al-Salawi in his work, *al-Istiqsa*. Hence, *al-Istiqsa* is able to present detailed and chronological historical information on al-Maghrib.

Apart from classical Arabic books, al-Salawi also referred to European sources in Latin, particularly those relating to Spain and Portugal, due to their historical link with the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. Al-Salawi had also met with European consuls who had official information on the history of the two states to verify the accuracy of information he had obtained. He had then published the completed *al-Istiqsa* at his own expense in Egypt at the end of Ramadan 1312 H./1895 A.D. This original publication is kept in al-Maktabah al-Sultaniyyah al-Khassah, Meknes (al-Salawi, 1954).

Al-Istiqsa which was printed in Dar al-Bayda' has nine volumes which discusses the history of al-Maghrib beginning from the process of *futuhat Islamiyyah* (Muslim conquest) until the reign of Sultan al-Mawla 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Alawi. The discussion in each volume can be summarized as follows (al-Salawi, 1954):

Volume 1: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the era of Khulafa' al-Rashidin, the Umayyad Kingdom and al-Idrisiyyah Kingdom.

Volume 2: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the era of Almoravids (al-Murabitun) and Almohad Kingdom.

Volume 3: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* from the commencement of the Marinid Kingdom until the end of Sultan Abu 'Inan Faris's rule.

Volume 4: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the Marinid rule after the demise of Abu 'Inan until its downfall.

Volume 5: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* from the commencement of al-Sa'adiyyun (Saadi or Saadite) until the demise of Sultan al-Mansur al-Sa'adi.

Volume 6: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the reign of al-Mansur's son until the downfall of al-Sa'adiyyun Kingdom.

Volume 7: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* from the commencement of the al-'Alawiyyun Kingdom until the reign of Sultan al-Mawla Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah.

Volume 8: The province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the reign of Sultan al-Mawla 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Alawi.

Volume 9: The last volume containing the general index of the whole work including the names of individuals, tribes and places.

This work became an important reference to several subsequent writings and works, whether in Arabic or in English. Nevertheless, the name used to refer to al-Salawi differed in those works. The two names used to refer to him were al-Salawi and al-Nasiri. Among the works which use the name al-Salawi are:

- al-‘Amiri (1974) in his work, *Tarikh al-Maghrib al-‘Arabi fi Sab‘at Qurun Bayn al-Izdihar wa al-Zabul min al-Qarn al-Sabi‘ ila Khitam al-Qarn al-Thalith ‘Ashar*.
- al-Faqi (1984) in his work, *Tarikh al-Maghrib wa al-Andalus*.
- Taha (1982) in his work, *al-Fath wa al-Istiqrar al-‘Arabi al-Islami fi Shimal Ifriqiyya wa al-Andalus*.
- al-Hariri (1987) in his work, *Tarikh al-Maghrib al-Islami wa al-Andalus fi al-‘Asr al-Marini*.
- Li‘raj (2006) in his work, *Madinat al-Mansurah al-Mariniyyah bi Tilimsan: Dirasat Tarikhiyyah Athariyyah fi ‘Umraniha wa ‘Imaratiha wa Fununiha*.
- al-Zirikli (2002) in his book, *al-A‘lam*, also referred to the writer of *al-Istiqsa* as al-Salawi.

The following works refer to him as al-Nasiri:

- Harakat (1984) in his work, *al-Maghrib ‘Abr al-Tarikh*.
- al-Sa’ih (1986) in his work, *al-Hadarah al-Islamiyyah fi al-Maghrib*.
- Abun-Nasr (1987) in his work, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period*.
- Brett & Fentress (1996) in his work, *The Berbers*.
- Pennell (2003) in his book, *Morocco: From Empire to Independence*.
- Garcia-Arenal (1978) also used the name al-Nasiri in his article, “The Revolution of Fas in 869H/1465AD and the Death of Sultan ‘Abd al-Haqq al-Marini”, which was covered in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London.

However, there is a piece of work which uses both names, al-Salawi al-Nasiri in its bibliography, that is, *History of North Africa: Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco from the Arab Conquest to 1830* (Julien, 1970). Further, there is also another work, *al-Sifarah wa al-Sufara’ bi al-Maghrib ‘Abr al-Tarikh* (‘Abd Allah 1985) which does not use either name but refers only to the work *al-Istiqsa* in its reference.

Warfare in the Marinid Era in al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa:

The work *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* describes the events which occurred in the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* during the reign of the Marinid Kingdom (1215-1465 A.D.). Based on the publication of Dar al-Bayda’, the issue of the Marinids is discussed in the third and fourth volumes, whereas in the Cairo publication, the same issue is discussed in the first and second volumes.This article cites information on the history of the Marinid military from the Dar al-Bayda’ publication. Warfare had always been an aspect of the Marinid military. This orientation was due to the emergence of the Marinids from a militant campaign in opposition to Almohad Kingdom leading to the overthrow of the latter and takeover of the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* by the Banu Marin. In fact, the military aspect is regarded as vital to the integrity and continued rule of the Marinids. This can be discerned from the expansive control of the Marinids over the whole of al-Maghrib and its involvement in *jihad* expeditions in al-Andalus (al-Salawi, 1954). The issue of warfare in the history of the Marinid military may be divided into three, that are: (1) consolidation of political status; (2) expansion of control over the whole province of al-Maghrib; and (3) *jihad* expeditions in al-Andalus.

Consolidation of Political Status:

The military involvement of the Banu Marin began when they took part in the *jihad* of Almohad against the Christians in al-Andalus in the Battle of Alarcos in the year 1195 A.D. However, the Marinids rose up against the Almohads especially when the Almohad army was defeated badly in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in the year 1212 A.D. This defeat weakened the Almohad Kingdom and was exploited by the Marinids to overthrow them. The first leader of the Marinids, ‘Abd al-Haqq b. Mahyu al-Marini, had his own political ambitions to form his own kingdom free of the Almohad’s influence. The weakness of the Almohad further deteriorated on the demise of its ruler, Sultan al-Nasir, who was replaced by his son, Yusuf al-Mustansir, then still a child. In addition, an epidemic disease which spread and killed many people further worsened the frail situation in the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* at that time (al-Salawi, 1954). The socio-political situation of the province had enabled ‘Abd al-Haqq to attack the Almohads with the aim of establishing a kingdom for himself.

In response to this opposition, Sultan Yusuf al-Mustansir had prepared an army of 20,000 men headed by Abu ‘Ala b. ‘Abd al-Mu’min to put down the Marinid army. He also ordered the governor of Fas, al-Sayyid Abi Ibrahim b. Yusuf b. ‘Abd al-Mu’min, to reinforce the Almohad military against the Banu Marin threat. This news reached the Marinids who lived at Rif and Batwiyyah, and they promptly left their families and properties to confront the Almohad. They fought in a place called Wadi Nakur. The conflict resulted in the defeat of the Almohad whowere forced to return to Fas. The victory had fired the zeal of the Marinids to strengthen their

control and position in the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. Their army continued to advance towards Ribat Taza on Dhu al-Hijjah 613 H./1215 A.D. There, the Marinids fought with the Almohad whowere aided by Arab tribes. Victory was again on the side of the Marinids. Further, the Marinids had acquired tremendous booty such as war horses, weapons and property (al-Salawi, 1954). The wealth from this booty became a source for the Marinids to improve their military capability. Their victory had strengthened their influence when Banu ‘Askar b. Muhammad gave their support.

Later on, the Marinids had to once again fight with Almohad military who were reinforced by Banu Riyah (Riyahid), a strong Arab tribe in al-Maghrib who had a well-equipped army with fighters and horses. A battle at Wadi Sabu in the year 1215 A.D. had caused the demise of ‘Abd al-Haqq and his son, Idris. After witnessing the death of their leader, the Marinids vowed with determination to avenge his death and destroy Almohad and the Banu Riyah. This determined zeal had succeeded in making the Marinids victorious in the conflict. Upon victory, they agreed to appoint the son of ‘Abd al-Haqq, ‘Uthman as the new leader of the Marinids (al-Salawi, 1954).

The Marinids strengthened its position when it captured Miknasah (643 H.) and Fas (646 H.). At the same time, the two other kingdoms of Banu Zayyan (Zayyanid) at Tilimsan and Banu Hafs in Ifriqiyyah were also emerging and trying to strengthen their positions. The emergence of these three new powers were a threat to Almohad’s position in the province of al-Maghrib. The entry of the Marinids led by Abu Yahya Abu Bakr (642-656 H./1244-1258 A.D.) into the city of Fas was even more significant (al-Salawi, 1954). The city of Fas was captured and made the administrative centre of the Marinids, leaving Almohad to control only southern al-Maghrib with Marrakesh as its centre. In fact, the governor of Fas, al-Sayyid Abu al-‘Abbas, had peacefully left Fas with his family as soon as Abu Bakr entered the city with his army.

The wars fought to establish influence erupted further during the Marinid leadership of Sultan al-Mansur bi Allah Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub b. ‘Abd al-Haqq (656-685 H./1258-1286 A.D.). The Marinids had overthrown the Almohad in Marrakesh in the year 1269 A.D., thus becoming the successor leader of the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. In the meantime, Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub and his army were marching to Marrakesh in the year 666 H. to besiege and attack the Almohad. On the way there, the Marinids were opposed by the Arab al-Khalat and Berber Sanhajah tribes but managed to overcome them. The Marinids had carried out spying and intelligence around the city of Marrakesh until the end of Dhu al-Qa‘dah 667 H. This action had caused Abu Dabus, the ruler of the Almohad, to call on the heads of Arab and Berber Masmuda tribes to discuss the next line of action. The meeting agreed that the Almohad had to engage in war with the Marinids (al-Salawi, 1954).

Both of the armies were sufficiently large and well-equipped with cavalry and archers. A terrible battle which erupted on Sunday, 2 Muharram 668 H. ended with the defeat of the Almohad and the demise of their leader, Abu Dabus in the battlefield. In fact, his head was severed and brought to Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub. The rest of the Almohad army fled to Tinmilal and unanimously agreed to elect Ishaq, the brother of al-Murtada as leader. However, in the year 647 H., Ishaq with the residual the Almohad army were captured and killed by order of Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub. Then, Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub with his large army in procession entered Marrakesh and was joyfully welcomed by the people (al-Salawi, 1954). The people regarded the presence of the Marinids as a blessing after witnessing too many destructive wars. The Marinids was accepted as the successor ruler of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* able to restore peace and political stability.

Expansion of Control Over the Whole of al-Maghrib Province:

The expansion of influence and control over the whole of al-Maghrib province occurred during the reign of Sultan Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali (731-751 H./1331-1351 A.D.) and Sultan Abu ‘Inan Faris (751-759 H./1351-1358 A.D.). Prior to this, the military campaign of the Marinids was focused on stabilizing political control over the province of *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* and *jihad* expeditions in al-Andalus. The expansion of influence to the whole of al-Maghrib began when Sultan Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali captured Tilimsan, the administrative centre of the Banu Zayyan Kingdom in the year 735 H./1336 A.D. Abu al-Hasan had ordered his wazir to gather the army and recruit fighters from various tribes for this purpose. The Marinid army had departed from Fas in the middle of 735 H. and captured one territory after another on the way to Tilimsan. Then, the tribes of Maghrawah and Banu Tawjin had met with Abu al-Hasan to pledge their allegiance to the Marinid Kingdom (al-Salawi, 1954).

Both parties had planned and adopted various tactics for this conflict. Various weapons including *manjanik* were used against each other. In fact, the ruler of Banu Zayyan, Abu Tashfin ‘Abd ar-Rahman (718-736 H./1318-1336 A.D.) had ordered a trench to be dug around the city of Tilimsan as a defence strategy. Despite this, on arrival at the city, Abu al-Hasan had directly commanded his army to attack the city. The daily repeated attacks had caused defeat and destruction to Banu Zayyan. Abu Tashfin with his two sons, ‘Uthman and Mas‘ud, and his officers, Musa b. ‘Ali and ‘Abd al-Haqq b. ‘Uthman, had stood in front of the palace doors as a sign of defeat and surrender. Later, the ruler and the nobles of the Banu Zayyan Kingdom were executed by Abu al-Hasan (al-Salawi, 1954). As a result of this battle, Tilimsan came under the administration of the Marinid Kingdom.

Upon ascension to the Marinid throne in 751 H./1351 A.D., Abu ‘Inan Faris aspired to continue his late father’s mission to unite the provinces of al-Maghrib under the Marinid administration. He had gathered military strength to invade Ifriqiyyah in the year 757 H./1357 A.D. The Marinid forces which advanced to Tunis were of two categories, the ground forces and the navy. When the ruler of Banu Hafs, Sultan Abu Ishaq Ibrahim b. Abi Bakr al-Hafsi, heard news of Banu Marin coming, he ordered his *hajib*, Abu Muhammad b. Tafirajin, to lead the army against the Marinids. The Marinid army reached Tunis and defeated the army led by Ibn Tafirajin. Abu ‘Inan with his army entered Tunis in Ramadan 758 H. and called on the people to give their loyalty to the Marinid Kingdom (al-Salawi, 1954).

Jihad Expedition in al-Andalus:

The Marinids had sent military aid or reinforcement and took part in the war against the Christian army in al-Andalus. The *jihad* expedition was requested by the Nasrid Kingdom which was under constant threat from the Christian powers to the north of al-Andalus. Hence, the steps taken by the Marinid Kingdom indirectly had a positive impact on the continuity of Muslim rule in al-Andalus.

The first expedition occurred in the year 674 H./1275 A.D. when the second Nasrid ruler, Muhammad *al-Faqih* had sent an emissary to request for military aid from the Marinids. At the same time, the Marinids were in political conflict with the ruler of Banu Zayyan, Yaghmurasan. Hence, Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub had sent his grandson, Tashfin b. ‘Abd al-Wahid b. Ya‘qub, as the Marinid representative to forge peaceful relations between the two kingdoms. This was so because Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub wished to focus attention on the *jihad* expedition in al-Andalus against the Christian army (al-Salawi, 1954).

The Marinid military comprised of the kingdom’s army and volunteers from various tribes such as the Berber Zanatah, Masmuda, Sanhajah, Ghamarah, Miknasah and Arab. After crossing over to al-Andalus, the military captured the coastal city of Tarifa. The Nasrid leaders led by Muhammad *al-Faqih* welcomed the arrival of the Marinid military. The joint forces of the two kingdoms formed a large military of about 5,000 men. They headed for Wadi al-Kabir and fought the Christians led by Don Nun. The Muslim army won the battle and acquired various spoils of war. In addition, Algeciras fell into Marinid hands. Don Nun’s head was severed and sent by Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub to Muhammad *al-Faqih* (al-Salawi, 1954).

The *jihad* expedition in al-Andalus was continued during the rule of Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub three more times after the first expedition, that is, in the years 1277, 1279 and 1285 A.D. The objective was to assist the Nasrid Kingdom to confront the Christian army and at the same time secure the continuity of Muslim rule in al-Andalus. However, another objective for the Marinids would be to strengthen its position and influence in al-Andalus after it was able to capture Tarifa and Algeciras in the first expedition. These two cities were vital as a buffer from direct threats by the Christian powers from the north of al-Andalus against the position of the Marinids in al-Maghrib.

The worst battle which ever occurred between the Muslim and Christian powers was the Battle of Tarifa or the Battle of Rio Salado in the year 740 H./1340 A.D. The Marinids were led by Sultan Abu Hasan ‘Ali (731-751 H./1331-1351 A.D.). In this battle, the Marinid navy was able to defeat the Christian Castile at sea when they were crossing over to al-Andalus. One of the reasons for the war was that Sultan Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali was set on avenging the death of his son, Abu Malik, the kingdom’s representative to al-Andalus who died when the Christians attacked prior to this battle. Sultan Abu al-Hasan had ordered his officers to the coast of al-Maghrib and prepare the navy for war. He also opened *Diwan al-‘Ata’* and offered high rewards for those fighters who wished to take part in the expedition. When ready, they advanced to Sabtah where the Christians were waiting to stop them from crossing over to al-Andalus. This obstacle had increased the zeal for *jihad* of Abu al-Hasan and his army. In fact, Banu Hafs had sent reinforcement of 16 battleships with fighters to Sabtah to fight alongside the Marinids. The Marinid army was led by Abu al-Hasan himself assisted by Zayd b. Farhun, the Banu Hafs navy commander and Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-‘Azfa, the governor of Sabtah. The battle, fought in the waters of Sabtah on 6 Shawal 740 H., was won by the Muslims. The Muslims who used swords and spears fought all out attacking the Christians and managed to climb onto their ships. Abu al-Hasan had congratulated the Muslim army and held a little merriment and singing by poets to rejoice their victory (al-Salawi, 1954). This victory had opened the way for the Marinids to cross over to al-Andalus.

In the year 740H, Abu al-Hasan had ordered the Marinid army, including mercenaries and volunteers, to cross over to al-Andalus. The total number who crossed over was estimated to be about 60,000 people, including the royal family and their servants. They had all landed at the coast of Tarifa on 3 Muharram 741 H. The Nasrid ruler, Sultan Abu al-Hajjaj Yusuf b. Isma‘il b. Ahmar, had also prepared his army to join the Marinid army against the Christian armies. The Muslim armies had set up camps as their headquarters. At the same time, The Christians had restored their defeated navy and besieged the camp areas. This caused the Muslim army to stay longer in the Tarifa territory until food supplies and livestock ran low. This weakened the Muslim army and the situation became chaotic. In the meantime, the Christian army from Portugal had gathered and was gradually moving towards Tarifa to reinforce the Christian army which was besieging the Muslim army earlier. The Christians infiltrated Tarifa and raided the Muslims at night-time while the guards were unaware.

Many of them approached the Sultan's camp to kill Abu al-Hasan and his family. A battle occurred resulting in the deaths of Abu al-Hasan's wives, 'A'ishah bt. Abi Bakr b. Ya'qub b. 'Abd al-Haqq and Fatimah bt. Abi Bakr b. Abi Zakariyya al-Hafsi. Nevertheless, Abu al-Hasan was saved by many soldiers who guarded and secured his safety from Christian attacks (al-Salawi, 1954).This defeat forced Abu al-Hasan and his army to retreat to al-Maghrib and the Nasrid army to return to Granada. This defeat had strengthened the Christian armies and they later recaptured Algeciras city from the Marinids in the year 1344 A.D.

Conclusion:

There are many Arabic works which discuss the history of al-Maghrib, and one of them is *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*, written by Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri al-Salawi. This work discusses the history of al-Maghrib in detail and according to chronology beginning from the time of the Khulafa' al-Rashidin until the reign of al-'Alawiyyun Kingdom. This 9-volume work covers the history of the Marinid Kingdom from its formation to its downfall in the year 1465 A.D. The warfare which took place during the Marinid era, as discussed in *al-Istiqsa*, is part of the history of the Marinid military. It was described with the aim of discerning and assessing the strength of the Marinid military then. The records of warfare in this work may be generally divided into three parts, that is, the consolidation of political stability, the expansion of control over the whole of al-Maghrib province and the *jihad* expedition in al-Andalus. This is in view of the fact that battles during the Marinid era were within these three scopes and objectives. However, this study concludes that the military campaigns and battles were solely to secure and defend the survival of the Marinids in *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa*. This action could be described as a product of the political thought of the Marin ruler to continue and sustain his rule. Hence, the work *al-Istiqsa li Akhbar Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* is an appropriate reference for researchers interested to study and analyse history and the Islamic civilization in al-Maghrib and al-Andalus generally, and in *al-Maghrib al-Aqsa* specifically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study is financed by the Research Group of Islamic Military History (SAKTI, INDUSTRI-2012-006), the Research Group of Arabic Culture and Islamic Civilization (KUKAPI, OUP-2012-038) and the Research Group of West Asian Region (AKRAB, OUP-2012-004).

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